

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 06010 160857Z

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P R 160815Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2333

INFO AMEMBASSY SIAGON

S E C R E T JAKARTA 6010

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG PBOR VS ID

SUBJ: ENERGY-LOS: GVN-GOI CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE

REF: A. SAIGON 6229 B. JAKARTA 5935

1. WE SHARE WITH EMBASSY SAIGON CONCERN OVER DANGEROUS
POTENTIAL OF UNRESOLVEDCONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE
BETWEEN INDONESIA AND SVN (REFTEL A). WE AGREE THAT
DIRECT US INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED AND THAT A
REEXAMINATION OF OUR HANDS-OFF POLICY IS
DESIRABLE.

2. EMBASSY LEARNED MAY 14 THAT AGIP INTENDS TO DRILL
EXPLORATRY WELL AT NEW LOCATION IN DISPUTED AREA IN
NEXT FEW WEEKS (REFTEL B). THIS COULD SPUR TYPE OF
CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH WE
BELIEVE IT IS IN OUT INTEREST TO PREVENT.

3. THIS EMBASSY IS PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF THE
COMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A PROBLEM AND ITS POSSIBLE
IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR AREA POLTIICAL AND LAW OF SEA
OBJECTIVES. WE BELIEVE WITH SAIGON THAT WE CAN
PERHAPS TAKE HELPFUL ACTIONS TO ENCOURAGE POLITICAL
LEVEL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES WITHOUT
GETTING INVOLVED IN MERITS OF DISPUTE.

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PAGE 02 JAKART 06010 160857Z

4. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT IN PERFECT WORLD INVITATION

TO GVN TO RECENT ASEAN CONFERENCE MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY, ALL OUR SOUNDINGS HERE MADE IT CLEAR THIS COULD NOT BE PURSUED WITHOUT RUNNING HIGH RISK THAT PRG WOULD ALSO BE INVITED. THIS EMBASSY'S ATTITUDE IN NO WAY REFLECTED LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR MEETING BETWEEN GOI AND GVN IN APPROPRIATE CONTEXT.

5. WHILE NOT REJECTING IDEA OF POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER BAC AND INDONESIANS AT CARACAS, I QUESTION WHETHER LAW OF SEA CONTEXT IS BEST FOR RESOLUTION THIS PROBLEM. PROBLEM FROM INDONESIAN SIDE IS BEING HANDLED AT PRESIDENTIAL AND POLITICAL LEVEL AND LOS DELEGATION MIGHT NOT BE EQUIPPED EFFECTIVELY DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM.

6. WE POSE FOR CONSIDERATION DEPARTMENT AND SAIGON FOLLOWING SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS: (A) THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED TO ASK EACH CAPITAL ABOUT REPORTS OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT OF CLAIMS AND TO EXPRESS OUR STRONG HOPE THAT TWO GOVERNMENTS CAN FIND A WAY TO RESOLVE PROBLEM; (B) THAT I BE AUTHORIZED SPECIFICALLY TO RAISE QUESTION WITH EIGHT FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK OR MINISTER OF STATE SUDHARMONO TO ASK STATUS FROM INDONESIAN SIDE, TO INDICATE DESIRABILITY OF EARLY MEETING WITH GVN TO PARTICIPATE. AT SAME TIME I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT WE DO NOT INVOLVE OURSELVES IN SUBSTANCE OF PROBLEMS OF THIS KIND; (C) SUGGEST DEPARTMENT CONSIDER RAISING QUESTION WITH GENERAL IBNU OF PERTAMINA WHO IS PLANNING VISIT WASHINGTON LATER THIS MONTH; (D) SUGGEST EMBASSIES ROME AND POSSIBLY KUALA LUMPUR BRING PROBLEM TO ATTENTION RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS.

7. WHILE APPRECIATING WIDER CONTEXT IN WHICH SAIGON SUGGESTS WE APPROACH THE PROBLEM, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT COMPLICATING A CLEAR-CUT CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE BY AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE WIDER POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. INDONESIA WOULD, WWE
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PAGE 03 JAKARTA 06010 160857Z

FEAR, BE LESS AMENABLE TO ARGUMENTATION OF WIDER POLITICAL INTERESTS THAN THEY WOULD TO URGINGS THAT A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ENERGY RELATED PROBLEM SHOULD BE SOLVED QUICKLY IN INTEREST OF ALL PARTIES.
NEWSOM

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